person moves through the closure, the upper segments of the closure part. After the person has moved through the closure, panels **11** and **12** close on each other, regardless of whether panel **11** is in front of panel **12** or vice versa. This is because the magnetic force between magnets **21** and **22** is directed in a plane substantially parallel to panels **11** and **12** and because there is no overlap between the panels, with the panels coming into abutting relationship along outer hemlines **27** and **28.**

Magnets **21** and **22** can be inserted into hems **23** and **24** by bonding the rear faces thereof, having relatively weak magnetic poles, to inner hemlines **29** and **30.** In the alternative, the permanent magnets can be formed by providing spaced regions of ferrous oxide powder in a plastic binder in hems **23** and **24.** The plastic binder is heated to substantially simultaneously coalesce the ferrous oxide powder and bond the powder to hemlines **27–30.** Thereafter, opposite polarity magnetic fields are applied to opposite ends of faces **25** and **26** of the fused ferrous oxide powder to form the permanent magnets. The technique of utilizing ferrous oxide powder in a plastic binder with a subsequent fusing action avoids possible problems of magnetic deterioration due to the Curie effect.

While permanent magnets are illustrated as being included in hems **23** and **24,** it is to be understood that only one of the hems need include such a permanent magnet and that the other hem may include spaced elements of high magnetic permeability, such as iron slugs. The iron slugs would be positioned in identically the same manner as the correspondingly located permanent magnets. It is also to be understood that the principles of the invention apply if only one of panels **11** and **12** is flexible, and that the other panel can be relatively rigid. In such an instance, the permanent magnets or elements of high magnetic permeability are positioned on the rigid panel in the same manner as the permanent magnets or elements of high magnetic permeability are located on the flexible panel or an elongated ferrous strip can be provided in the rigid panel. In either case, the magnetic force from the permanent magnet is provided across the boundary in a direction generally parallel to the plane of the rigid panel and the flexible panel when the closure device is closed.

If only one of panels **11** or **12** is flexible, in accordance with a further alternative, the magnetic force in the plane parallel to the fixed and flexible panels can be provided by an elongated permanent magnet strip including magnetized pole faces on opposite faces of the strip. Such a configuration is illustrated in FIGS. **1, 2** and **4** for the horizontally extending portion of the closure device between lower edges **15** and **16** of panels **11** and **12** and threshold **17.**

The closure device between threshold **17** and each of edges **15** and **16** is formed by providing an elongated magnetized strip **32** that is mounted in a recess on the upper surface of non-magnetic longitudinally extending, relatively rigid threshold member **33.** Strip **32** is magnetized so that the north and south pole faces of the magnet are on opposite faces **34** and **35** of the strip. Thereby, while the closure device is closed, the pole faces provide a magnetic force component that extends, to a certain extent, in planes including and parallel to the plane of panels **11** and **12.** The magnetic force from magnet **32** provides an attractive force for corresponding gapped magnetic elements extending horizontally along the bottom edges **15** and **16** of flexible panels **11** and **12.** The gapped magnetic elements along edges **15** and **16,** in the embodiment of FIGS. **1, 2** and **4,** comprises link chains **36** and **37,** which are fabricated of material having high magnetic permeability such as iron. Link chains **36** and **37** inherently provide the flexibility for edges **15** and **16** that is provided by including spaced members of high magnetic permeability in one of hems **23** or **24.** Of course chains **36** and **37** inherently provide the necessary air gaps for the magnetic field derived from strip **32** and therefore such a chain can be substituted for the magnets along one of the vertically extending borders.

In operation, after outer seams **27** and **28** have closed so they are in contact throughout their lengths, link chains **36** and **37** contact and are held in situ against the magnetized upper surface **34** of strip **32** to provide complete closure of panels **11** and **12** against threshold **17.** Because of the air gap between adjacent links of chains **36** and **37,** edges **15** and **16** do not bunch from center line **18** to the points where the edges are pinned to the extremities of threshold **17.**

It is noted that outer hemlines **27** and **28** are in abutting relationship throughout their lengths so that there are no air holes in the slit formed between the two outer hemlines. Similarly, no air holes subsist in the slit between the lower edges **15** and **16** and threshold **17.** Thereby, the closure device of the present invention is particularly adapted for use with structures in which it is important to prevent relatively small objects, such as insects or flies, from moving through the closure device while it is closed.

In this connection, reference is made to FIG. **5** wherein the closure device illustrated in FIGS. **1–4** is illustrated as the door of a tent **41.** The door is comprised of flexible panels **11** and **12** having abutting vertical edges **13** and **14** and horizontally extending lower edges **15** and **16** that are in abutting relationship with the permanent magnet strip **32** that extends along threshold **17.** Flexible panels **11** and **12** are sewn at their outer and top edges to a rectangular cutout in tent **41.** Thereby, the upper corners of edges **13** and **14** have an apex, along center line **18** at the intersection of the center line with the upper portion of the cutout region of the tent.

The invention can also be employed as a closure device in many other applications. For example, the invention is illustrated in FIG. **6** as a closure device for a garment having a longitudinally extending opening in the vertical direction as defined by the edges of panels **42** and **43.** The garment preferably includes a mechanical fastener **44** which initially joins the upper edges of panels **42** and **43** together. After fastener **44** has joined the upper edges of panels **42** and **43** together, the remaining portions of the panels are automatically joined together by the combined forces of gravity and the magnetic forces that subsist across the boundary of the closure, as provided by permanent magnets **21** and **22.**

While there have been described and illustrated several specific embodiments of the invention, it will be clear that variations in the details of the embodiments specifically illustrated and described may be made without departing from the true spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

I claim: